

Virginia Comprehensive Assistance Network [VA CAN] Meeting

February 25, 2004

Meeting Notes:

Attendance:

Richard Rasmussen – DEQ, Andy Feagans-DMAS, Eric Olson– DPOR, Keith Boisvert – DEQ, Jim McKean- DBA, Linda Hawkins- IRS, Scott Dailey- SBA, Willie Miles- DMBE, Tracy Garland- RU BAC EMAP and Chuck McCarty - DEQ.

Note: **Bold** indicates first time attendee.

1. Opening/Introductions

Round-the-table introductions and descriptions of programs represented.

2. Business Appreciation Week (May 16-22, 2004) - Discussion

The consensus of the group was to try to piggy-back at another group's event rather than sponsoring a VACAN event. It was felt that various members of the group could carry the VACAN message while attending events representing their own group/agency.

Last year's event at Radford was well into the planning stages by this time last year and it was felt that there might be enough time to plan an event this year.

It was suggested that a subcommittee be established in the near future to explore a VACAN event during Business Appreciation Week in 2005. Consider volunteering for this committee.

3. April 14th Renewal and Planning Session – Discussion

Consensus Solutions' President, Adam Saslow, has agreed to return to facilitate the session to help VACAN review its past and chart its future. Adam has agreed to only charge his travel expenses. They will be covered by the remaining funds from the Radford event last Spring. A subcommittee of volunteers was formed to plan and develop an agenda. We need to find a site for the meeting. Anyone having any ideas is encouraged to contact any of the planning committee. Eric Olson has offered DPOR's Auditorium but parking is difficult. The volunteers were Tracy, Willie and Richard. They will meet by conference calls, first call scheduled for Wednesday March 3, 2004.

4. Show and Tell

- **Grow America - Scott Dailey, Deputy District Director for Economic Development, US SBA - Richmond**

Scott explained that Grow America is based in New York, NY and is a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Development Council. It partners with government and public entities for loans. It will provide the SBA 75% guarantee allowing the loan fund pool of money for a group to be greatly increased in its capacity for giving loans. They do charge some overhead costs. After the initial screening by the government or public entity that the

loan criteria is met (ie. minority business, remediation loan, etc.), Grow America will provide complete services to the government or public entity for the entire life of the loan.

Scott will forward information about the program to Richard to be sent by email to the whole VACAN group. The email will also include information about registering for two Grow America presentations scheduled for March 10 and 11 in Richmond at the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce. He also mentioned that he and Grow America hope to visit the southside and southwest parts of Virginia in about six weeks.

- **Program Updates**

- Scott mentioned that SBA has a new lender in Virginia- Innovative Bank. He mentioned that a new Business Information Center has opened in southside Richmond. He also mentioned that a Women Owned Business Center has opened in downtown Richmond.

- Richard passed around information regarding a Continuing Education course from UVA that will cover performance measures. He mentioned that his loan fund has funds available for lending to small businesses. He passed around a copy of the Vapor Recovery System Compliance Calendar that has been distributed to gas stations in the Northern Virginia and Richmond regions. The calendar will help the stations to comply with Stage I and II regulations and underground storage tank requirements.

- Eric mentioned that he will be working with training reporters and producers at Channel 12 on Saturday about the licensing requirements for contractors and will mention VA CAN.

- Andy distributed an updated FAMIS brochure that has the new income eligibility limits for coverage. He also mentioned the outreach program that will occur in May during “Cover the Uninsured Week”.

5. Future – Discussion

- **Web Site**

Richard distributed a handout for a VA CAN web site that Brenda Eggleston of the Air Division at DEQ has developed. The site contains the mission statement, most current copy of the complete directory, meeting notes for the last three meetings, tools (a sample VA Can brochure and newsletter article that anyone can use), events and links. The group decided that it will be placed on the DEQ Small Business Assistance Program’s web site for now, until a decision is reached on where to house the site. As soon as the site goes up Richard will let everyone know.

- **Upcoming Events**

- Tracy mentioned a Business Expo event planned by the Pulaski Chamber of Commerce for March 25-26. She also mentioned that Roanoke Region Small Business Development Center sponsors a business expo that will take place April 27th <http://www.roanokechamber.org/>.

- Linda mentioned a Richmond Industrial and Construction Show on April 6-7 at Richmond Raceway.

- Willie mentioned an event for road builders in Norfolk on March 24.

- Richard mentioned the Small Business Resource Day on May 7 sponsored by the Center for Entrepreneurial Development in Richmond.

- **Products**

There was discussion of establishing an internet calendar of events that VA CAN members could use to post or check for upcoming events. This would allow the members to share information and piggy-back with each other for various events. Richard will check to see if this could be added to the web site.

6. Need Additional Information for VA CAN Booklet

There is still a need for the “blue page” information from most VA CAN members. It would include a one sentence description of each program you want listed with the appropriate contact information [phone number, address, web site, etc.].

7. Follow Up/Next Meeting



COME be part of VA CAN's RENEWAL April 14, 2004
SAVE THE DATE

SPECIAL GUEST -- Adam Saslow, has agreed to return to facilitate
-- -- help VA CAN review its past and chart its future -- --

If you haven't been able to participate, we understand. We do need and want your input to help us to help you maximize your resources. So please, set aside this one day for one meeting to help us help you.

Our NEXT MEETING -April 14, 2004.

Tentatively scheduled to be from 10 AM until 4 PM.

Site and agenda will be forthcoming -- STAY TUNED

We will need your RSVP by April 8, 2004. Please contact Richard Rasmussen at 804-698-4394.